GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1699
ANSWERED ON:10.12.2008
INDIANS MISSING IN NEW ZEALAND
Chaudhary Shri Pankaj;Jagannath Dr. M.;Yerrannaidu Shri Kinjarapu

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some Indian Nationals en route to Sydney were reported missing in New Zealand.

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS(SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE)

(a) Yes.

(b) 40 Indian nationals enroute to Sydney to participate in the World Youth Day celebrations organized by the Catholic Church, Australia in July 2008, did not board their onward flight, after arriving in New Zealand and went missing. These 40 Indian nationals were among a group of 220 Indian pilgrims, who were granted one-month visitor visa by the New Zealand High Commission in Delhi. Of these 40 Indian nationals, 38 left their passports with the local Catholic Church sponsors and did not show up thereafter. Two persons kept their passports with themselves.

(c) Our Indian Mission in Wellington is in touch with the Immigration and Labour Department and the local Foreign Office for tracing the missing Indian nationals. 20 of the missing 40 Indian nationals, have since returned to India and the efforts are continuing to locate the remaining Indian nationals.